

THE BOJABI TREE

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EDITH RICKERT



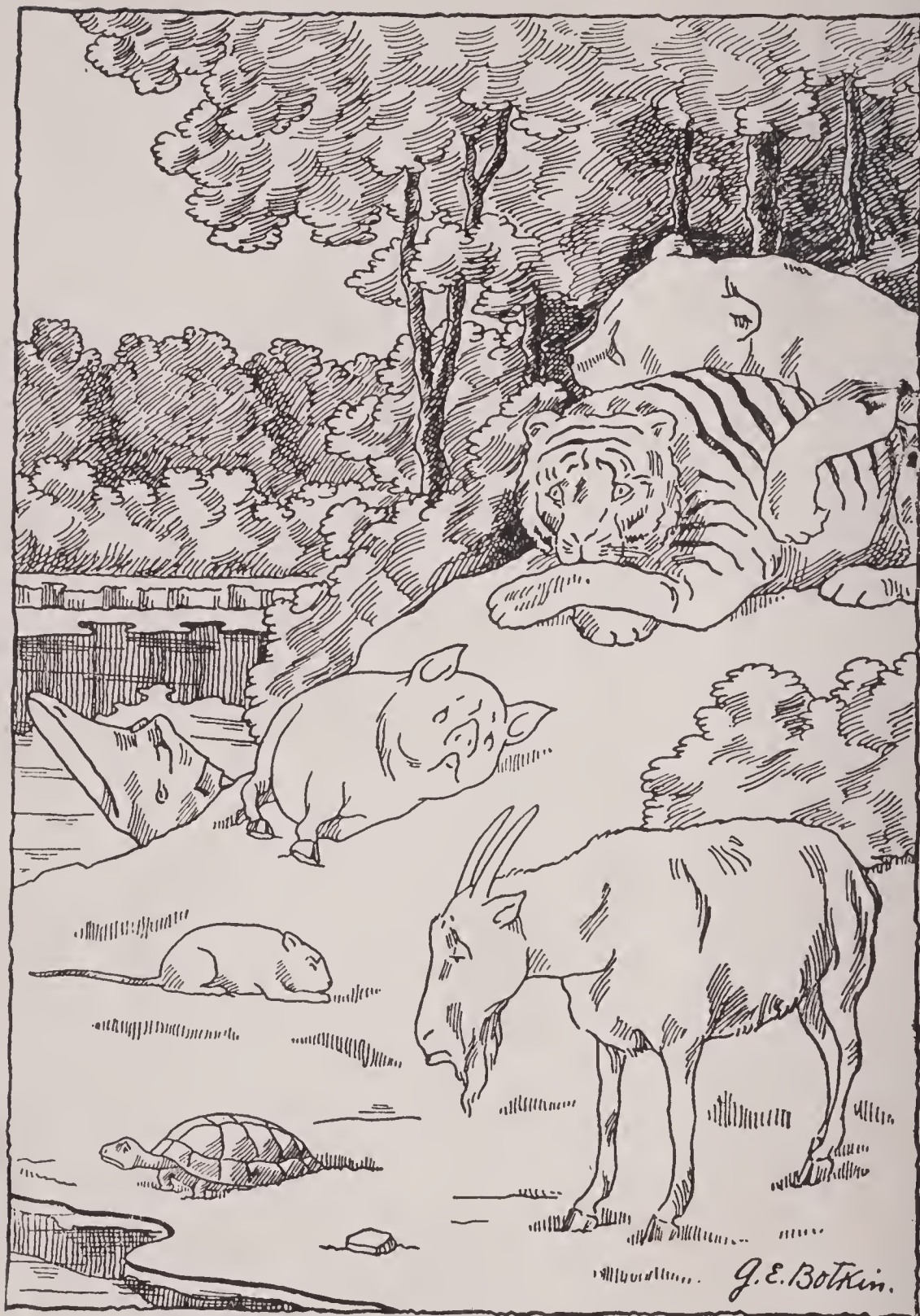
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THE BOJABI TREE



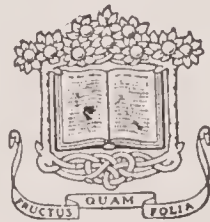
ALL THE BEASTS WERE HUNGRY



THE BOJABI TREE

BY
EDITH RICKERT

PICTURES BY
GLEB BOTKIN



GARDEN CITY
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
1923



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THE BOJABI TREE



CHAPTER ONE

ROBIN RAT

In the land of All-the-Beasts there was a
GREAT HUNGER. Some of the animals
who were so HUNGRY were

Tabby Tiger

Bruno Bear

Katy Crocodile

Robin Rat

Pinky Pig

Giddy Goat

Tommy Tortoise

and many more—more than you could ever
count in a year.

THE BOJABI TREE



THEY COULD NOT EAT IT

They ran around the wood, here and there and everywhere, eating roots and twigs and any old scraps they could find. But still they were HUNGRY.

One day they came to a Big Tree full of fruit. But they could not eat it, for they did not know what it was.

ROBIN RAT



“LET US SEND ROBIN RAT”

They sat down in a circle round the tree,
and said, “What can we do?”

When they had thought a while, they said,
“Let us send Robin Rat up the river to Leo,
our King, and ask him what the fruit is and
whether we may eat it.”

THE BOJABI TREE



ROBIN RAT PICKS THE FRUIT

Robin Rat was young and spry. He scuttled up the tree and brought down one of its fruits to show King Leo.

It was a DELICIOUS looking fruit!

It looked like an
APPLEORANGEPLUMPEARBANANA
but it smelled like a
BANANAPEARPLUMORANGEAPPLE.

ROBIN RAT



SUNSET ON THE RIVER

Then Robin Rat scuttled down to the river bank and climbed into his little canoe.

All the day and all the day he paddled
and paddled
and PADDLED

up the river.

And the Great Red Sun dropped behind the trees.

THE BOJABI TREE

Then he found King Leo on the bank, all ready to receive visitors. He was wearing his crown tipped on the back of his head because he felt happy. He smiled at Robin Rat as pleasant as you please, and asked him to stay to supper.





ALL READY TO RECEIVE VISITORS

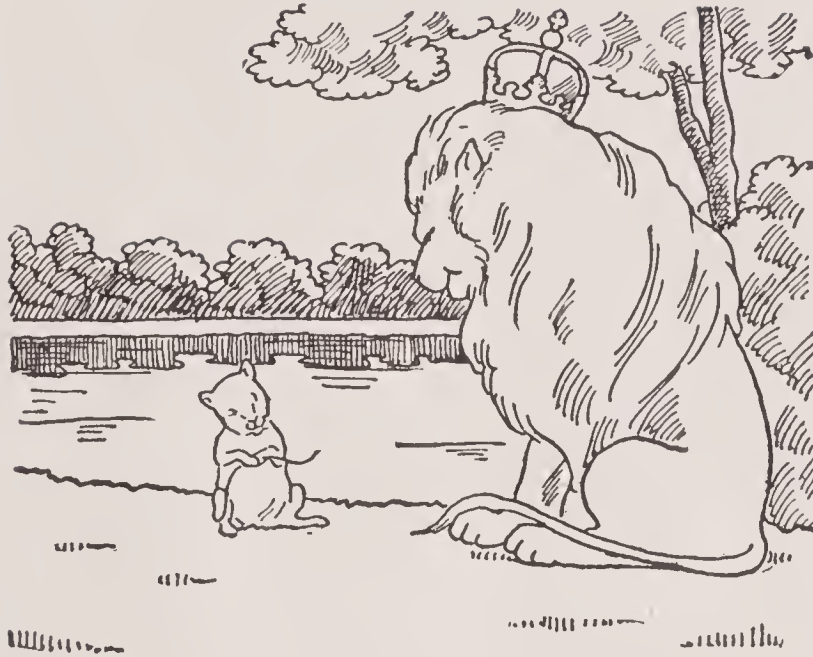
THE BOJABI TREE



NIGHT IN THE GREAT WOOD

After supper they curled up and went to sleep. There was nothing else to do, you see. For this is the way it looked in the
GREAT WOOD.

ROBIN RAT

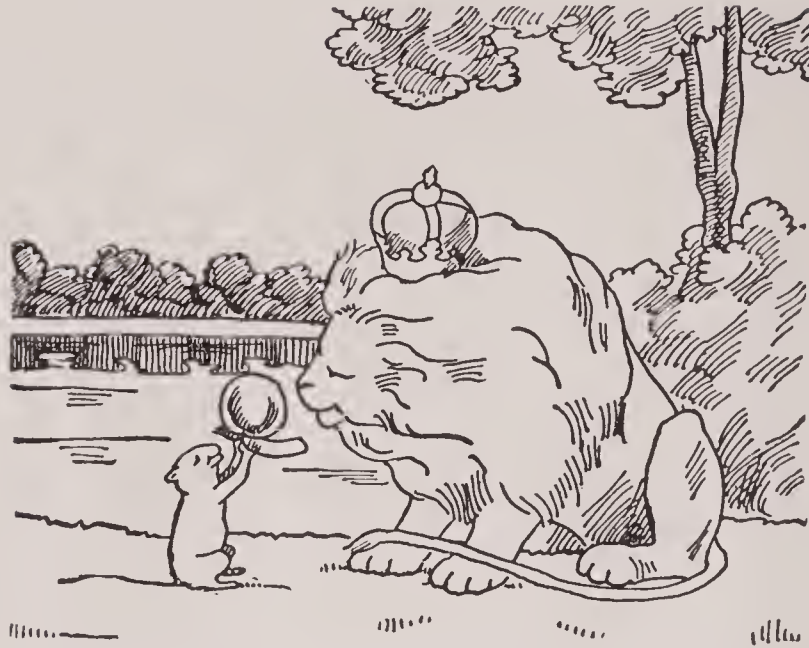


IN THE MORNING

In the morning King Leo said politely,
“What can I do for you, my small friend?”

Then Robin Rat answered, “Please tell us,
King Leo, what is the name of this tree and
whether we may eat the fruit of it. We are
all SO HUNGRY!”

THE BOJABI TREE



KING LEO SNIFFS AT THE FRUIT

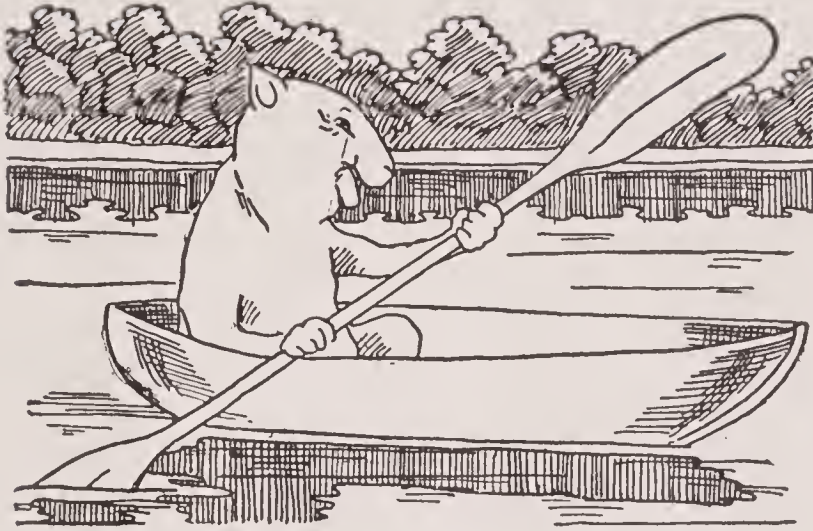
King Leo looked at the fruit that was like
an

APPLEORANGEPEARPLUMBANANA
and he sniffed at the fruit that was like a
BANANAPLUMPEARORANGEAPPLE.

Then he said, "It is a good fruit. You may
eat it. The name of the tree is

BOJABI."

ROBIN RAT



ALL THE DAY HE PADDLED

Then Robin Rat hung his cap over his right ear and climbed into his little canoe.

All the day and all the day he paddled down the great river.

And all the way he was thinking how much he could eat of that

DELICIOUS fruit.

And at night he came home.

THE BOJABI TREE



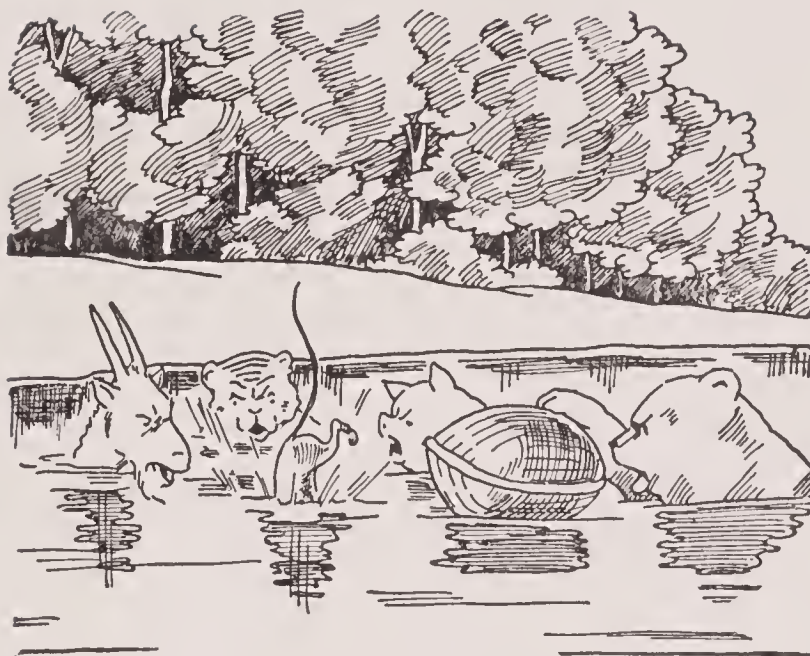
WAITING FOR ROBIN RAT

All the Beasts were waiting for him on the shore. He came up, whisking his paddle *this* way and *that* way through the water, just to show how well he could do it.

“What is it, Robin Rat?” said All the Beasts. “Tell us the name!” they roared and howled and grunted and whined and shrieked and squealed, each in his own PARTICULAR voice.

“Oh!” said Robin Rat. “I knew it a while ago, but now I have clean forgotten.”

ROBIN RAT



WHAT HAPPENED TO ROBIN RAT

Then All the Beasts stepped into the water
and upset Robin Rat's little canoe.

They **SPLASHED** and they
SPLUTTERED and they
SP-L-ANKED

Robin Rat.

Squeaksqueaksqueaksqueaksqueak!

Nobody heard a word more from *him* that
day.



CHAPTER TWO

PINKY PIG

But now All the Beasts were HUNGRIER STILL.

They sat in a circle round the tree and thought a while.

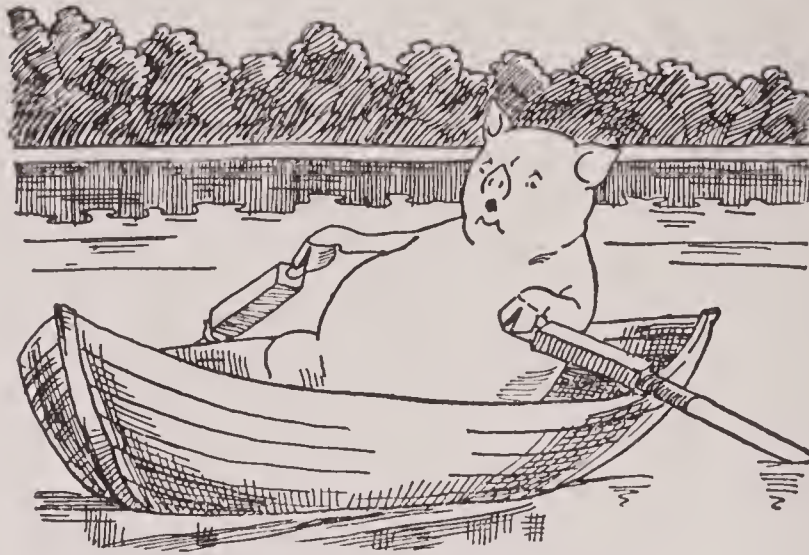
Then they said, “Let us send Pinky Pig to King Leo to ask the name of the tree. But Pinky Pig,

DO NOT FORGET IT!”



“LET US SEND PINKY PIG”

THE BOJABI TREE



ROWING UP THE RIVER

Pinky Pig trotted away home—

trip trap, trip trap, trip trap.

He put on his best blue coat and buttoned it up, though it squeezed him a little.

Then he trotted—trip trap, trip trap, trip trap—down to his little rowboat and took his oars to row up the big river.

All the day and all the day he rowed
and he rowed
and he ROWED
up the big river.

PINKY PIG



KING LEO ON THE BANK

And the Great Red Sun dropped behind the trees.

Then he found King Leo on the bank, all ready to receive visitors. His crown was a little crooked because he had put it on in a hurry when he saw Pinky Pig coming.

He smiled politely but he did not invite Pinky Pig to stay to supper.

THE BOJABI TREE

“What can I do for you, my plump friend?”
he asked.

Pinky Pig showed him the fruit that looked
like an

APPLEORANGEPEARPLUMBANANA
and smelled like a

BANANAPLUMPEARORANGEAPPLE,
and said, “Please, King Leo, we must know
the name of this tree or we cannot eat the
fruit. Please be so kind as to tell us.”

Then King Leo said,

“I have told Robin Rat.

I will tell you.

The name of the tree is

BOJABI!

Do not forget it.”



“WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?”

THE BOJABI TREE



H-R-R-R-UMPH!

Pinky Pig trotted back to his rowboat—
trip trap, trip trap, trip trap.

All the night and all the night he rowed—
he rowed—and he ro-o-owed until the oars—
dropped—from—his—hands—and the big
river took the boat down itself.

Pinky Pig curled up under the seat. And
this is the sound that came from the boat:

H-r-r-r-umph

h-h-r-r-r-umph

h-h-h-r-r-r-r-UM-MPH!

PINKY PIG



THE ARRIVAL OF PINKY PIG

In the morning Pinky Pig sat up and rubbed his eyes. He was at home. All the Beasts stood on the river bank looking at him. “What is it, Pinky Pig? Tell us the name!” they whistled and snarled and squealed and shrieked and whined and grunted and howled and roared, each in his own PARTICULAR voice.

“I know it,” said Pinky Pig. Then he yawned.

“I knew it last night,” he said, “but—ah—ah—I—must—have—been—asleep, and—ah—for—got—ten it.”

That is the way he talked when he was yawning.

THE BOJABI TREE

Then All the Beasts jumped into the water
and smashed Pinky Pig's boat and his oars.

They PLUNGED about and

PUNCHED poor Pinky Pig and

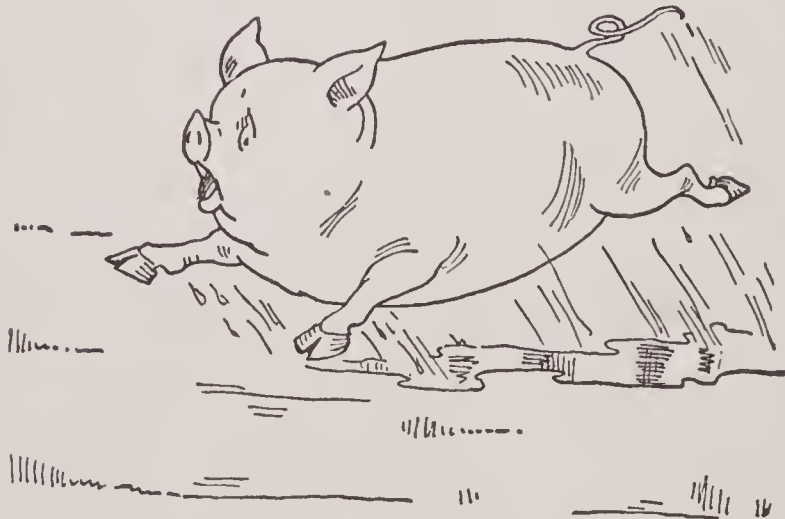
POUNDED him until he went

plop—plop—into the water.

SQue-e-e-e-e-E-E-E-E-E-E-E-E-AL!

He ran home with the water running off
him and making little puddles here and there.

Nobody heard a word more from *him* that
day.



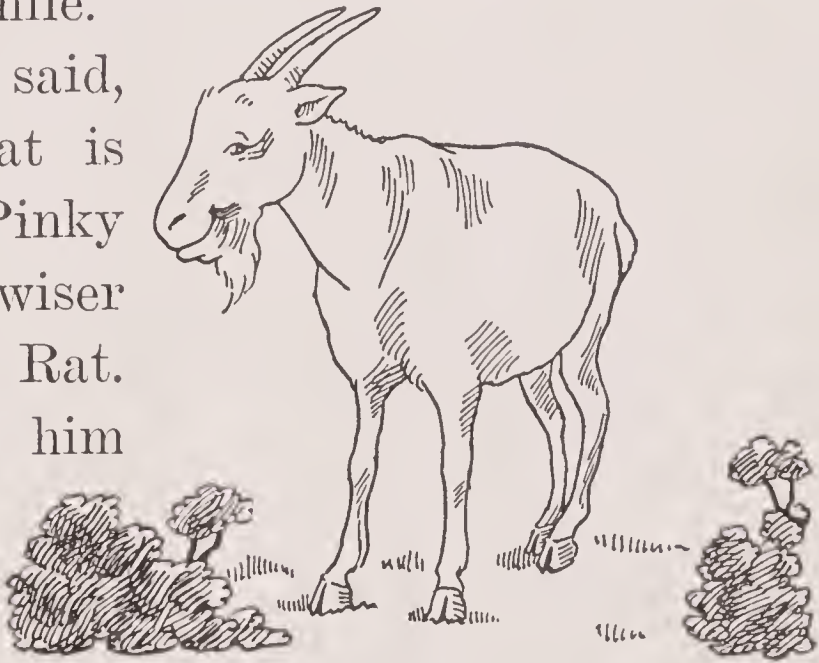
CHAPTER THREE

GIDDY GOAT

But now All the Beasts were HUNGRIER and HUNGRIER. They could have eaten nails if there had been any nails in the Great Wood.

They sat in a circle round the tree and thought a while.

Then they said,
“Giddy Goat is
older than Pinky
Pig, and wiser
than Robin Rat.
Let us send him
to King
Leo to ask
the name

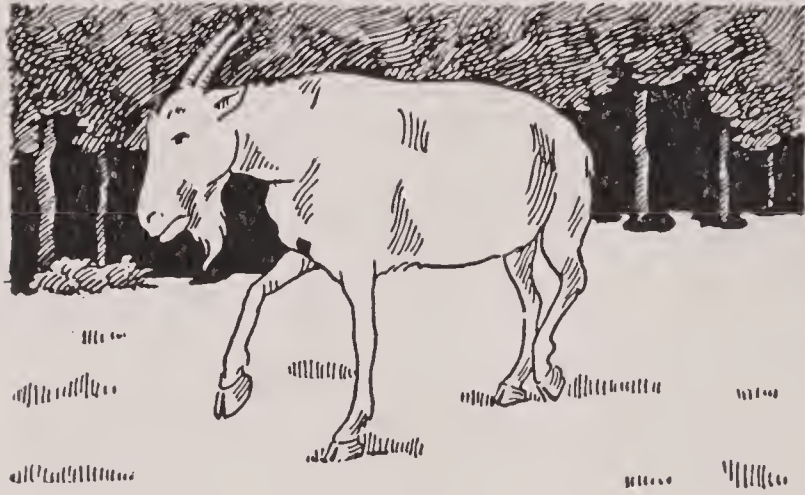


of the tree, so that we may eat the fruit of it
before we starve.

But Giddy Goat,

DO NOT FORGET IT !”

THE BOJABI TREE



“A-rashum!” said Giddy Goat. He was afraid of catching cold. Away he ran—ker-lipp, ker-lipp—to his house to get a big woolly muffler to wear on the river. He wrapped it three times round his neck and tucked it neatly under his beard.

Then he ran—ker-lipp, ker-lipp—down to his little sailboat on the river.

All the day and all the day he sailed
and he sailed
and he SAILED
up the big river.

And the Great Red Sun dropped behind the trees.

GIDDY GOAT



SAILING TO KING LEO

Then he found King Leo on the bank, *not* ready to receive visitors. His crown was on straight and he looked very CROSS.

THE BOJABI TREE

“Whatdoyouwant?” he snapped—just like that.

“A-rashum!” said Giddy Goat. “I beg your Majesty’s pardon. I have a cold coming on.”

He showed King Leo the fruit that looked like an

APPLEORANGEPEARPLUMBANANA
and smelled like a

BANANAPLUMPEARORANGEAPPLE,
and said, “If you would be so very kind, King Leo, to tell us the name of this tree, so that we may know whether we may eat the fruit of it.”

Then King Leo said,

“I have told Robin Rat.

I have told Pinky Pig.

I will tell you.

But I will not tell ANYBODY ELSE.

The name is B O J A B I.

DO NOT FORGET IT!”



“I BEG YOUR MAJESTY’S PARDON”

THE BOJABI TREE



“A-rash-oo!” said Giddy Goat and he skipped away—ker-lipp, ker-lipp—to his sailboat.

All the night and all the night he sailed
and he sailed
and he SAILED.

All the way he was remembering the name,
and he remembered it very well.

He sailed so fast that he got home in the
early, early morning.

And all the way when he wasn't remembering
the name, he was sneezing:

“A-tchoo! A-rashum! A-tchoo!”

GIDDY GOAT

All the Beasts were waiting for him—rows and rows of them. Those in the back rows looked over the shoulders of those in the front rows, or climbed on their backs.

They pushed and jostled one another until they had upset Giddy Goat's sailboat. Ker-splash!—he went into the river.

Such a sight as he was when they pulled him out. His long hair was full of water. His beard was full of water. His eyes were full of water. His beautiful new muffler was full of water.

When the animals crowded round him to ask the name of the tree, he shook himself so that the water flew in their faces, and ran away home

—ker-lipp,
ker-lipp —
with a most
dreadful



A-TCHOO!

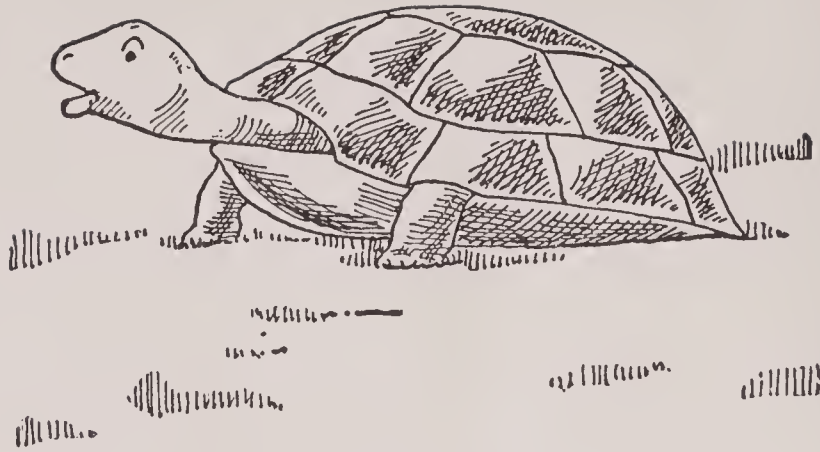


SUCH A SIGHT!

GIDDY GOAT



His wife made him go to bed. And not one word could anyone get from him all that day but A-tchoo! A-rashum! A-TCHOO!



CHAPTER FOUR

TOMMY TORTOISE

By this time All the Beasts were so H U N-
G R Y that they sat round the tree and cried.

You see there was no one else who had a
boat.

“What shall we do?” they wailed and
howled and buzzed and grunted and groaned
and sobbed and lamented, each in his own
most PARTICULAR voice.

Then Tommy Tortoise, who had been lying
asleep in the sun, opened one eye, and said,
“What is all this fuss about? Haven’t you
found out the name of this tree YET?”

They said they had not and cried harder
than ever.

TOMMY TORTOISE

“Oh, well,” said he, “if that’s all, I’ll go and get it for you.”

“YOU!” snarled Tabby Tiger.

“You! You!” grunted Bruno Bear.

“You!” snapped Katy Crocodile, biting her word off short.

“You-u-u-u!” trumpeted Elizabeth Elephant.

“You! You! You!” chattered Mimi Monkey.

You never heard such a noise—not even at the circus—as there was when they all said this, each in his own PARTICULAR voice.

“Yes, me—I mean *I*,” said Tommy Tortoise in his little, thin voice.

Then he crawled slowly home, trailing one foot after the other, as some boys do on their way to school.

He found his mother knitting stockings and rocking the baby.

“Hssh!” said Mrs. Tortoise. “He’s just dropping off.”

THE BOJABI TREE

“Mother,” said Tommy Tortoise. “How can I remember the name of that tree if I go up the river to get it?”

“Tommy,” said Mrs. Tortoise, “do you remember how you used to go to school with all the other little tortoises and learn things?”

“Yes, said Tommy.

“Nine times one makes nine,

Nine times two makes eighteen,

Nine times three makes twenty-seven—”

He said the Nines table because anybody can say the Tens, and he wasn’t sure about the Elevens.

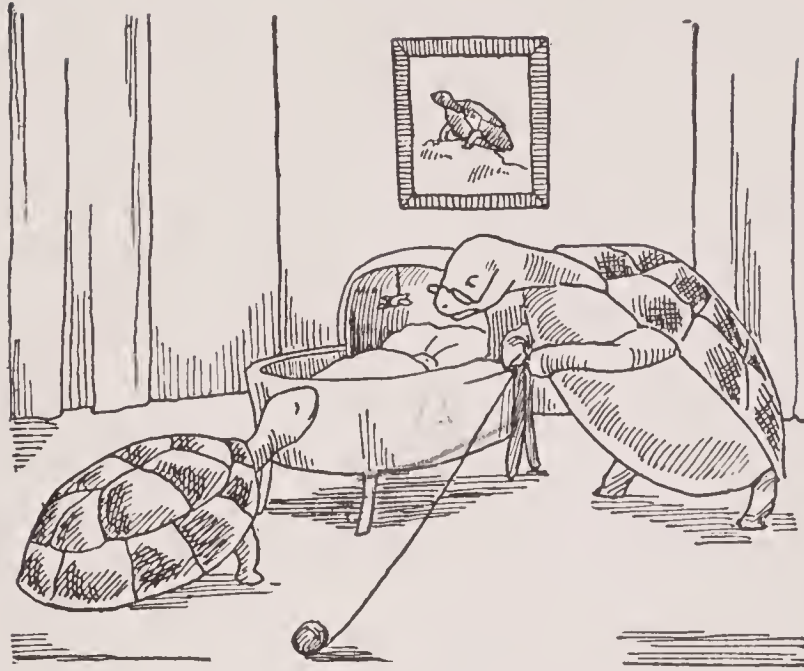
“Hsh!” said Mrs. Tortoise. “That will do. You will wake the Baby.”

“But I will tell you how to remember.” She whispered in his ear.

Then she said, “Now, Tommy, whatever happens to you, mind your manners. Remember to bow to King Leo and to speak to him so politely that he will know you have been well brought up.”

“Yes, Mother,” said Tommy Tortoise.

TOMMY TORTOISE



MRS. TORTOISE GIVES ADVICE

Then he put on his cap with the red tassel,
and he went down to the river. He had no
boat; so he had to swim.

All the day and all the day he swam
and he swam
and he SWAM.

When he was tired swimming, he would turn
over on his shell and float with all his legs
kicking in the water, just as the Baby kicks
in his bath.

THE BOJABI TREE

And the Great Red Sun dropped behind the trees.

When Tommy Tortoise reached King Leo's home, King Leo was NOT curled up comfortably wearing his crown and ready to receive visitors. He was standing on the river bank waving his tail. His big head was wagging *this* way and *that* way, and he was not smiling AT ALL.

Before Tommy could speak a word, or even make his best bow, King Leo said:

“R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R!
S-s-cat! S-scamper! S-scat! S-skedaddle!

I told Robin Rat.

I told Pinky Pig.

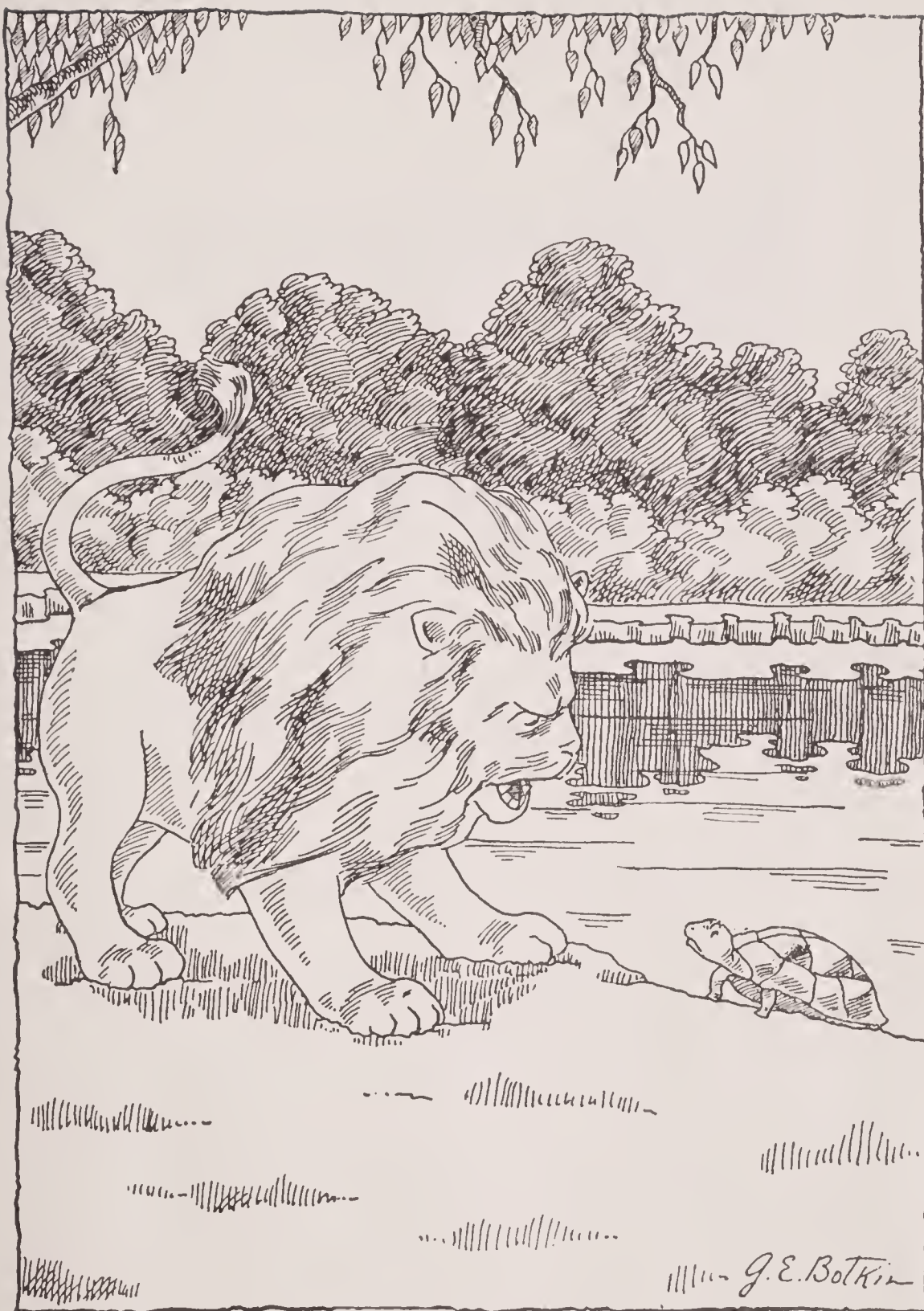
I told Giddy Goat.

I WILL NOT TELL YOU

that the name of the tree is bojabi.

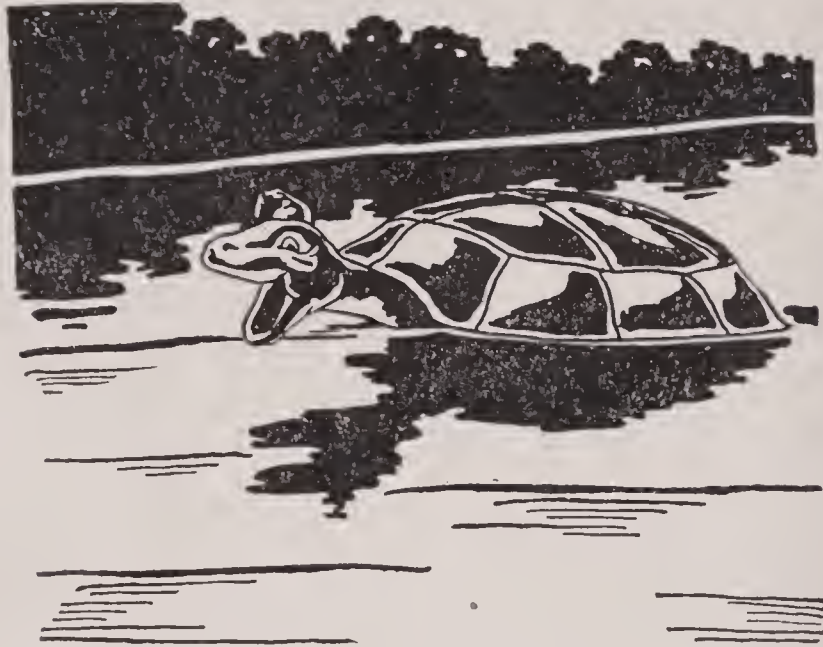
R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R-R!”

“Bojabi,” whispers Tommy Tortoise to himself, and jumps—ker-lump—into the river again.



“I WILL NOT TELL YOU”

THE BOJABI TREE



SINGING ON THE RIVER

All the night and all the night he swam
and he swam
and he SWAM.

But it was easy work to let the big river carry
him on its back.

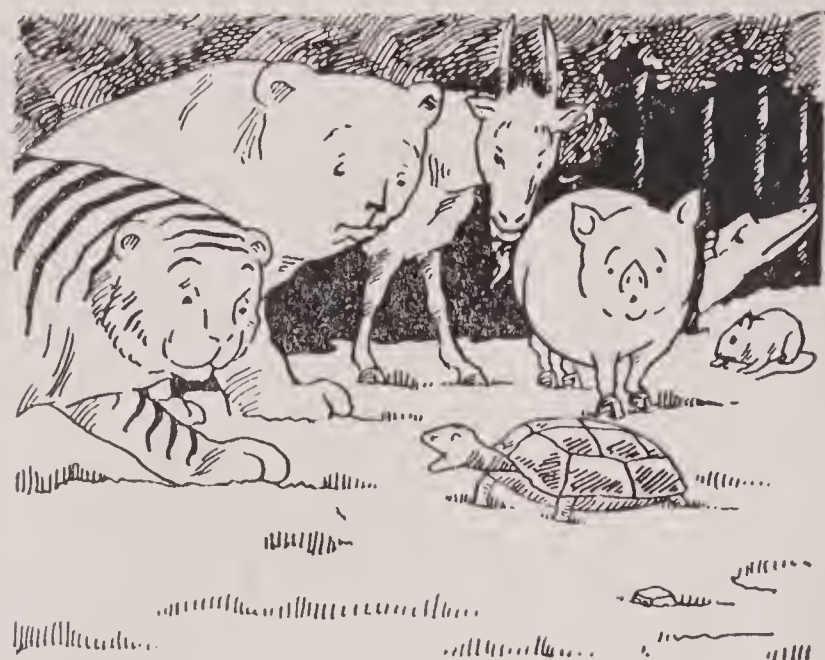
All the night and all the night he made up
a little song and sang it, like this:

TOMMY TORTOISE

“O Robin Rat, what shall we eat?
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O Pinky Pig, so fat and neat,
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O Giddy Goat, so fast and fleet,
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O Humpy Hippo, hard to beat,
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O Bruno Bear, with clumsy feet,
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O Katy Crocodile, here’s a treat,
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O Tommy Tortoise, of Puddle Street,
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.
O All-the-Beasts, come quick and eat
Bojabi—bojabi—bojabi.”

And THAT was what his mother had told him to do.

THE BOJABI TREE



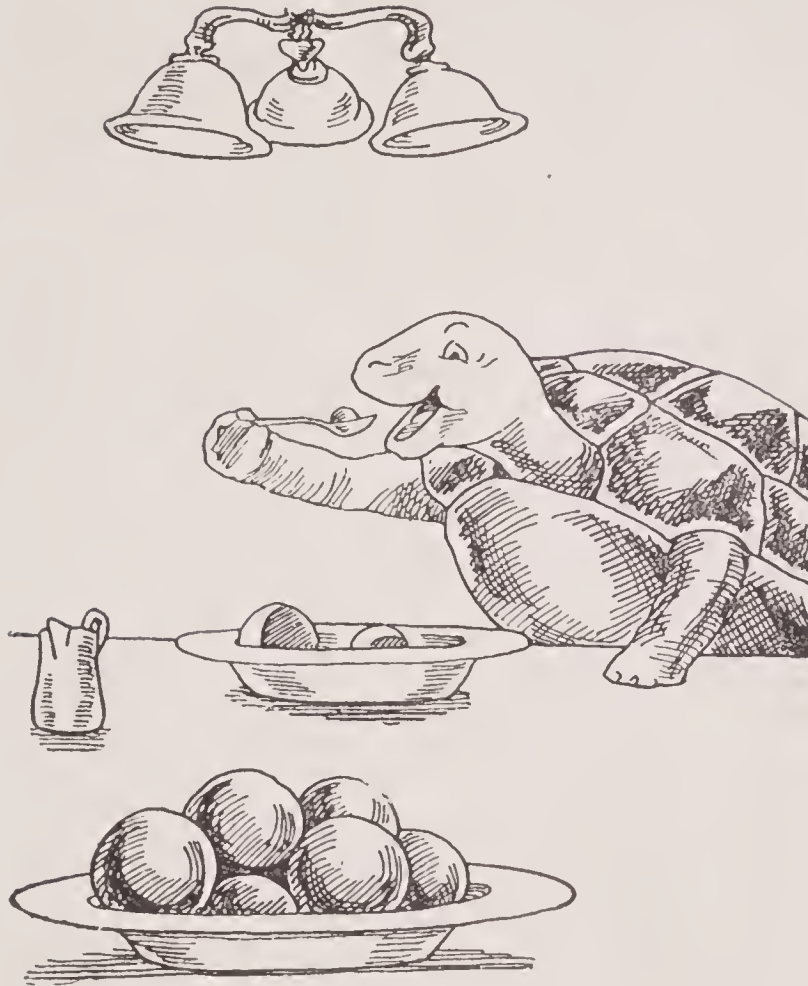
All the Beasts were lying on the bank of the river. Far away they heard the little, thin voice of Tommy Tortoise singing his song. They pricked up their ears, looking *this* way and *that* way as they listened.

And presently Tommy Tortoise came crawling up through the mud.

“What is it?” they cried, each in his own PARTICULAR voice. You would have thought that all the circuses in the world were there.

“Bojabi,” said Tommy Tortoise, and crawled away home without another word.

TOMMY TORTOISE



SUPPER!

That night All the Beasts had bojabi for their supper.

But Tommy Tortoise had cream with his.



THE KING OF ALL THE BEASTS

TOMMY TORTOISE

After that All the Beasts in that wood were never hungry. They could always eat bojabi.

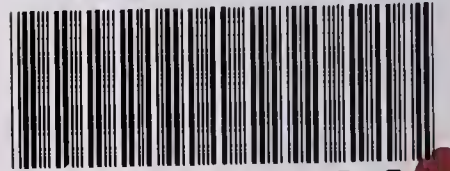
They made Tommy Tortoise their king. "For," they said, "if he could remember the name of the bojabi tree, he can do anything."

As far as I know he is king of All the Beasts in the Great Wood to-day.

—Adapted from an African Folk Tale.



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